



ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

MINUTES

February 27, 2018
Michigan Library and Historical Center
702 W. Kalamazoo Street
Lansing, Michigan

ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL (AAC)

PRESENT

Tom Jones, Vice-Chair
Ken Buchholtz (*via conference call*)
Cindy Burkhour
Vendella Collins
Justin Lippe
Will Purves
Bryan Wilkinson
Kimberly Woolridge

ABSENT

Scott Norris, Chair
Al Bobrofsky
Jonathon Edgerly
Michael Harris
Neal McKenzie
Sara Peurakoski

PRESENT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (DNR)

Sharon Schafer, AAC Executive Sponsor
Michael Holsinger, ADA Coordinator
Yolanda Taylor, Assistant to the AAC

PRESENT FROM THE DNR ACCESSIBILITY TEAM (A-TEAM)

Lynne Thoma, Fisheries
Jan Hebekeuser, Forest Resources
Christie Bayus and Tamara Jorkasky, Grants
Kirk Lapham, Legislative and Legal Affairs
Diana Engle, Michigan Historical Center
Dave Haupt, Marketing and Outreach
Sara Cummins, Wildlife

INTERPRETERS

Kim Crump and Stacy Pierce

OTHERS PRESENT

Joel Hoffman (*ex-officio member*), Interim State ADA Coordinator, Department of Civil Rights,
with guest Kelley Frake
Rebecca Powell, Department of Civil Rights
Keith Cheli, Regional Field Planner, DNR Parks and Recreation (*presenter*)

REGULAR MEETING

INTRODUCTIONS

Sharon Schafer, AAC Executive Sponsor, announced the chair, Scott Norris, reinjured his shoulder and is unable to attend today's meeting. Therefore, the council will first address the election of a vice-chair before proceeding so that person can chair the meeting.

After roll call, Sharon announced that the chair had reached out to Tom Jones regarding his interest in becoming the vice-chair and Tom accepted, but he has to be voted in by the council.

Cindy Burkhour motioned to appoint Tom Jones as the vice-chair of the council; Ken Buchholtz seconded the motion; the motion unanimously carried with no objections and Tom Jones was appointed vice-chair of the council, effective immediately.

Sharon introduced Will Purves from the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living (AACIL). Will was hired to do strategic planning and program development for them and is now a staff member and on the AACIL Board. Will was recommended by the AACIL to replace Carolyn Grawi.

Sharon then introduced Mike Holsinger. Mike is the new facility manager for the Finance and Operations Division (replacing Dan Lord who accepted the position as Grants manager) and will also assume the role as the department's ADA Coordinator.

Bryan Wilkinson is one of the newest members on the council and this is his first meeting. Bryan commented he is seventeen years post-injury and has been interested in becoming a member of the council for some time. Bryan thanked the council for appointing him and looks forward to contributing to providing accessible recreation for all users.

Sharon then handed the meeting over to the newly elected vice-chair.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice-Chair Jones asked the council if they had any additions, corrections or discussion regarding the December 12, 2017 Minutes. No corrections, edits or discussion was offered.

Vice-Chair Jones requested a motion to approve the December 12, 2017 Minutes; Cindy Burkhour motioned to approve the Minutes; Kim Woolridge seconded the motion; the motion unanimously carried and the December 2017 Minutes were approved.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS

Keith Cheli, regional field planner for the DNR Parks and Recreation Division, was approached by a utility company that wants to place electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in two state park and one harbor location. Keith previously presented this proposal to the department's accessibility team and at the December 2017 council meeting. The proposal was also vetted through the council's Infrastructure and Natural Resource Programs subcommittee and is now before the council for their endorsement.

Keith gave an overview for those that were unable to attend the previous meetings or presentations regarding this proposal. When the utility company initially came to him with this proposal, they were unaware of any ADA standards that would have to be considered and, technically, there are currently no ADA standards addressing EV charging stations. However, Keith and other department staff educated them on ADA standards and, instead of walking

away, the company became even more interested in what requirements they should meet to ensure accessibility for all users.

Keith then gave a brief overview of some of the changes that were incorporated into the design of the EV charging stations and parking spaces based on input received through these meetings. Bryan Wilkinson also weighed in on the proposal which helped validate that the subcommittee work is relevant, what is being proposed makes sense and it is moving in the right direction.

The subcommittee believes that they really elevated the standards. This is an industry that will continue to grow and gain momentum into the future. The director of the Michigan Energy Office found out they were working on developing accessibility standards for EV charging stations. He reached out and very quickly realized that what this subcommittee created could very well become the statewide standard for all EV charging stations (i.e. rest areas, grocery stores, apartment complexes, etc.).

After entertaining questions about the project and its design, and after in-depth discussion, the council requested clarification on some of the features but, otherwise, three motions were proposed, as follows:

1. A motion to endorse this project and its design as outlined in the documents provided, and recommend the department move forward with its implementation and installation.

Cindy Burkhour motioned to endorse this project, its design as presented, to include clarification on some features as discussed, and recommend the department move forward with implementation; Vendella Collins seconded the motion; there were no objections; the motion unanimously carried and the Parks and Recreation Division will move forward with the utility company on the design, placement and installation of the charging stations and parking spaces.

2. A motion to recommend the department adopt this design concept and establish it as their standard design template for all future EV charging station installations at state facilities.

Cindy Burkhour motioned to recommend the department adopt this design as their standard design template for all future EV charging station installations at state facilities; Kim Woolridge seconded the motion; there were no objections and the motion unanimously carried.

3. A motion to investigate the process of moving this design and standards through the Michigan Department of Civil Rights for consideration and adoption as the standard for all state agencies.

Cindy Burkhour motioned that the subcommittee will investigate moving this design concept through the proper channels for consideration as the standard design for all state agencies; Justin Lippe seconded the motion; there were no objections and the motion unanimously carried.

Joel Hoffman with the Department of Civil Rights commented that the subcommittee could present this to the Governor-established Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council and would also recommend eventually presenting it to the U.S. Access Board.

Sharon commented that this is an excellent example of how valuable it is to run projects, designs, thoughts or ideas through the department's accessibility team, the subcommittees and

the council. It is a very educational and productive process for all from start to finish. She encouraged Keith and other department staff to talk amongst their peers about this experience and the process and encourage them to think outside the box and bring things forward for review and input.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and Park Endowment Fund

The council welcomed Director Creagh to the meeting. After introductions around the room, the Director thanked the council for inviting him. He is pleased to meet the council members and the department's accessibility team members. The Director provided the council with an update on legislation and other executive initiatives.

Senator Tom Casperson introduced Senate Joint Resolution O which calls for a constitutional amendment to the Park Endowment Fund. Currently, all revenues from non-renewable resources such as oil and gas are split 50/50. Fifty percent goes towards building the corpus, and fifty percent goes to state parks. This resolution would change the percentages so that twenty-five percent goes into the corpus, fifty percent would go to state parks, and not less than twenty-five percent would go to local units of government only for development projects. This resolution, if passed, could generate approximately \$7,000 to \$10,000 towards additional projects. If this legislation is passed by the House and the Senate by May, it would be placed on the August ballot.

Senate Bill 551, introduced by Senator Hildenbrand, seeks to amend Part 19 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to clarify how the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board will determine the amount of money to be made available each year for the funding of projects. It is the opinion of a lot of groups, organizations and individuals that the Legislature should not be allowed to identify projects or dictate where trust fund dollars should be spent over and above what the Trust Fund Board recommends.

The Director commented that accessible recreation is core mission critical to the department. This week he had conversations about access to water trails, and the department is also working with organizations in the Upper Peninsula that need additional help providing accessible hunting and fishing.

The Director also reported there will be efforts to expand where the Recreation Passport is required in an attempt to address its long-term sustainability and create more funding towards state park infrastructure. Finally, the department is also working with the Legislature to perfect land use bills and change department policy to become good neighbors by working more with the locals.

Cindy Burkhour commended the department for establishing criteria that encourages and rewards grantees that go above and beyond the minimum ADA requirements, and asks that the department continue to encourage greater accessibility in all grant programs. The Director agreed and assured the council that accessibility criteria will continue in all existing grant programs and will be implemented in any new grant programs that are developed.

Vice-Chair Jones commented about the park passes that allow 100% disabled veterans or a Medal of Honor recipient free entry into state parks. A lot of veterans do not or cannot drive, or they have recreational therapists drive them. Could the department look at perfecting their policy so that, as a passenger, just having the paperwork showing they qualify for free entry would allow the vehicle free entry? Director Creagh responded he is in support of working on perfecting this policy. Tom also commented on legislation that has historically been introduced

proposing that all veterans should be allowed free entry or discounted entry into state parks. He commented that, as a veteran himself, they don't want free hand outs, they just want to be thanked, recognized and appreciated.

Keith Cheli commented on the proposed \$100 million infrastructure bond that the Governor's Office has been considering for state park enhancements and improvements. If implemented, this group could benefit from this bond by creating more accessible recreation and improving accessibility in the state parks. Director Creagh responded that there currently is \$23 million in the budget for parks and recreation capital improvements. Accessibility will be incorporated into all park enhancements, improvements and new builds moving forward. Discussions regarding the bond issue are ongoing.

Diana Engle asked the Director if accessible water trails will be handled by the Office of the Great Lakes. The Director reminded the council that the Office of the Great Lakes has always handled coastal water trails, while the department has handled inland waters. However, now that the Office of the Great Lakes has merged with the department, this will be a great partnership for creating accessible water trails throughout the state. Diana responded that we look forward to having them represented on the accessibility team.

The Director had to excuse himself as he was on his way to meet with the Legislature. The council thanked him for taking time out of his busy schedule to talk with and meet the group. Director Creagh thanked the council for their efforts in making sure all citizens have access to Michigan's world class natural resources.

Executive Updates

Sharon Schafer announced that Shannon Hanna was appointed as the assistant chief for the Forest Resources Division. Shannon has twenty years' experience with the department and was formerly the regulatory expert in the Wildlife Division. Sara Cummins is currently covering Shannon's position until it is filled.

The department also recently announced that Jacklin Blodgett will be the assistant chief for the Parks and Recreation Division. This is the first time in over ten years that they have had an assistant chief.

Accessibility Team Updates

Diana Engle, chair of the accessibility team, provided an update on accessibility team efforts.

Keith Cheli and his group, with this EV charging station proposal, have demonstrated a great model for proactive cooperation between the divisions, the accessibility team, the council and the grantees, vendors or organizations. This could be the catalyst for all future designs around the state.

Diana reported that certain representatives from the accessibility team were invited to participate in a conference call with Pure Michigan. There was discussion about the role of the accessibility team and the council. Diana passed along information about the department's accessible recreation web site, the request to have more images of people with disabilities enjoying outdoor recreational activities included in Pure Michigan advertisements, and better ways to search for accessible recreation on their web site.

The department's website is undergoing a huge transformation. Julie Ellsworth, accessibility team member from the Marketing and Outreach Division, has been doing an incredible job getting this department's website revamped and ready for release. Members of the accessibility

team have had a chance to review the new accessibility web page at www.michigan.gov/dnraccessibility. Diana praised Julie for her outstanding work.

Diana also provided an update regarding Kali's Cure. The monetary gift from the foundation is moving forward. The foundation was going to originally donate the units, but it was decided they would donate the money to allow the department to purchase five tracked chairs. Once purchased, the tracked chairs will be strategically placed in state parks for public use. Mike Holsinger is working with the foundation on getting things finalized.

Vice-Chair Jones commented that he would like to be involved when the department is ready to purchase the tracked chairs. He and Bryan Wilkinson work directly with the president of Michigan Outdoor Mobility. He gets them factory direct so they can probably save the state some money on the purchases.

Cindy commented that she is currently working with the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Park to provide tracked chairs and would also like to coordinate this with Tom and Bryan. Tom responded he has been in touch with Sleeping Bear Dunes. They have already delivered a tracked chair to them but would be happy to coordinate any future purchases or donations.

Cindy also reported she was contacted by the Pure Michigan film crew. They exchanged some video of the Winter Sports Park and they may do some filming of the summer luge at Muskegon State Park. So Pure Michigan is reaching out and doing some things to capture more images of people with disabilities enjoying the outdoors.

Yolanda also reported that Kristin Phillips, the Marketing and Outreach Division chief, made contact with Kelly Wolgamott, Director of Travel Marketing for Pure Michigan, and she has accepted the invitation to attend the August 2018 council meeting, as well as an accessibility team meeting as her schedule allows.

Cindy asked about the accessibility team's strategic plan update. Diana responded that it is not quite ready but we can share it with the council for their information once completed.

Legislative Update

Kirk Lapham, Legislative and Legal Affairs, gave the council a brief update on legislation that may be of interest to the council.

House Bill 5378 was introduced in January and proposes to provide free all-species fishing licenses to people with developmental disabilities.

Lynne Thoma from Fisheries reported there currently is a discounted license for seniors over 65 and residents who are legally blind. Fees are also waived for resident veterans that are 100% disabled or are full-time active duty military. There is also a permit that can be obtained through the Law Enforcement Division that allows a person with a fishing license to take a group out fishing (i.e. group home). The permit is good for one year.

Kirk responded that this legislation is for individuals only.

Vice-Chair Jones asked about House Bill 5180 that addresses pneumatic bows. Kirk responded that this bill is still moving through the Legislature. The department has no position on this bill.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

Terms

Sharon announced three members were reappointed to the council; Cindy Burkhour, Bryan Wilkinson and Michael Harris. She thanked them for their interest in continuing to serve on the council and they received their reappointment letters at the meeting. Their terms will expire in 2021.

Carolyn Grawi, former council member, recently resigned from the AACIL. Michael Purves, who is present at the meeting, was appointed by the AACIL as her replacement. As soon as the department approves, he will be appointed as Carolyn's replacement to fulfill a term expiring in 2019.

Elections

The council elected Tom Jones as its vice-chair at the beginning of the meeting.

Vacancies

Sharon announced there currently are three vacancies on the council. She and the chair, Scott Norris, have had numerous conversations about filling those vacancies. They have agreed that, instead of the department or the chair dictating who should be on the council, it would be best for the council members to reach out and have interested people or organizations apply for the vacancies. It is also important to review the roster of current members and who they represent to ensure the membership is well-rounded and that all disability communities or organizations are represented at the table. We also need to make sure we do not have multiple representatives from the same organizations or those that partner with existing organizations already on the council.

Cindy Burkhour recommended The Arc Michigan. They represent people with developmental disabilities and Sherry Boyd is the current director. However, we have Vendella Collins on the council who represents the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council. Cindy also recommended an adaptive sports organization that specifically represents outdoor recreation. We have Sara Peurakoski on the council that represents SAIL (Superior Alliance for Independent Living) but there may be more organizations in the Lower Peninsula.

Sharon asked that council members send their nominees or recommendations to her, Scott Norris, and Tom Jones, with a copy to Yolanda. Yolanda will in turn provide an application for interested parties to complete.

August Meeting in Traverse City

Sharon reminded the council that there is an extensive amount of behind-the-scenes work that goes into planning and arranging meetings, and even more so with meetings and tours that are held outside the Lansing area. It also includes coordinating with other divisions and utilizing their staff. While we want to make sure the council has opportunities to visit and enjoy state-owned or managed sites, we need to have a firm commitment from members regarding their attendance and participation. Last minute cancellations, unless for emergencies, can be costly and are not acceptable.

The established meeting date is August 21. If there are council members that cannot attend this meeting, they need to notify Yolanda as soon as possible before lodging and other planning arrangements begin. She also asked for a firm commitment from those that say they will attend.

Vice-Chair Jones acknowledged and agreed with the need to make a firm commitment for the August meeting, as well as all other meetings.

Council Updates

Cindy Burkhour asked for an update on the Hunt from a Standing Vehicle Application. As a reminder, council members made some recommended language changes at the December 2017 council meeting. Kirk Lapham responded that the changes to this application are on hold pending the outcome of the pneumatic bow legislation. It will come back to the council for an update at a later date.

Cindy Burkhour further commented that the council, in 2017, went through its first year/round of reviewing grant applications/projects and making recommendations to enhance accessibility. It proved to be a very useful and informative process for department project coordinators, grant coordinators, planners, designers and staff. She is now inviting the department to also put their base designs through the review process for input and recommended improvements. Some older designs that need to be revisited and upgraded would include vault toilets, camper cabins, picnic tables, fit and finish structures, information kiosks, camper registration buildings, etc. As Director Creagh mentioned earlier, there may be more opportunity and dollars available for smaller projects, renovations and improvements. This would be a good opportunity for the department to set the standard by adopting more universally accessible design templates and standard practices with input and advice from this council. She would like to ask the department to consider this discussion at a future meeting.

Vice-Chair Jones mentioned that his organization, Michigan Operation Freedom Outdoors (MiOFO), had the first David Pollie Classic essay contest last year. The winner of the essay contest received a free tracked chair. The contest was for adults but he received a lot of entries from children. It broke his heart to read some of the entries so this year's essay contest will focus on youth ages 5-18 years old that has a medical need for this type of device and no other means of obtaining such a chair. There are fewer opportunities and resources available to connect young people with this type of mobility assistance. The winner will receive a youth model tracked chair. A press release will be coming out soon. Tom welcomed all members to get the word out to their organizations, communities, friends or family whose child could benefit from receiving a tracked chair so they too can enjoy the outdoors. They are hoping to give out the tracked chair before summer.

Tom also mentioned their organization has been receiving a lot of donations. They just recently received a trike bike; a three-wheeled bike with a battery for people with disabilities. He asked council member Justin Lippe, with the Michigan Recreation and Park Association, and Bryan Wilkinson, to get the word out and let him know which county, city, local or metro-park with paved trails could use the bike. He just wants to donate it to a park that could use it the most.

Last year's Independence Hunt was held at the Leonard Preserve in Manchester and the Sharonville State Game Area in Grass Lake. In November 2017, the City of Manchester held a wild game dinner honoring MiOFO. The community wanted to thank them for their services and the opportunities they provide to veterans and other hunters with disabilities.

Vice-Chair Jones then commented about the importance of 'community.' We need to start thinking more about how we can get out into the communities with other accessible features and activities. Examples would include raised garden beds for people in wheelchairs, accessible playgrounds, playgrounds designed specifically for children with autism to get them in the outdoors, sensory playgrounds and activities for people/children that are deaf and blind, E-Z lifts at boat launches/docks, accessible fishing on rivers/streams and inland lakes (actually being able to get in or on the water), accessible features and equipment along the Iron Belle Trail, etc.

Instead of reinventing the wheel, Tom is hoping council members would be interested in partnering up with him by locating these communities where there is the most need, as well as resources that are already available. Some of these components could include partnerships with the department, but Tom is ready to get started this year. Looking around the table, all council members have a lot of expertise or some sort of connection to this information or resources. The mission would be to expand accessibility on a small scale, or on a greater scale if warranted and if funds or equipment (in-kind) donations become available. An excellent example would be what the "Explore the Shores" is doing in Manistee County. The possibilities are endless. Tom has adopted the idea that it's not truly Pure Michigan unless it's an accessible Pure Michigan.

Tom asks if any members are interested in joining forces with him this year, to please contact him. Also, any members that have information about communities in need, resources that are already available, or programs that are already in place to please share that information as well. Maybe the council could consider establishing a focus group or subcommittee to focus on these efforts.

Will Purves responded that the AACIL and the Disability Network of Michigan both run extensive youth programs. He would be happy to share information or requests through their networks.

Yolanda also mentioned that she was contacted by a lady from Meridian Township who saw "Electric Vehicle Charging Stations" on the December 2017 AAC Agenda. It sparked her interest and has inspired her to apply for a grant to place charging stations along their trails for people that use electric assistive mobility devices. She mentioned that a lot of their parks and trails are close to nursing and senior adult care facilities. It would be nice for the residents to independently get outdoors, on the trails and in the parks, and enhance their quality of life. She was unable to attend today's meeting but did pass along the message to thank the council for their inspiration.

Cindy Burkhour mentioned an e-mail complaint that was sent to the entire AAC last December regarding the removal of accessible routes at Belle Isle in preparation for the Belle Isle Grand Prix. Sharon said she will track down the e-mail and have Mike Holsinger work with the Parks and Recreation Division to respond.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

CLOSING BUSINESS

Vice-Chair Jones assigned some homework to the council. He is looking for census information or statistics from 2015 to present regarding the percentage of people (18 years and older), as well as students with developmental and other disabilities. Cindy Burkhour suggested the Department of Education may have statistics on children that are/were in the school system that received special education services or had developmental or other disabilities. Will Purves commented that Michigan State University and other universities prepare census/statistical information and reports as well.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 1 out at the Rose Lake Shooting Range. Yolanda will send out a poll to all AAC and A-Team members regarding their availability for the August 21 meeting in Traverse City.

Sharon mentioned that these are the "council's" meetings. If there are any items that council members would like added to the agendas, please notify her, the chair, the vice-chair, Mike

Holsinger and Yolanda Taylor. We would prefer to create agendas covering topics that are of interest to the council versus coming up with topics just from a department standpoint.

Future agenda items requested include:

- Update on accessible improvements to Belle Isle since their visit in October, 2015;
- Office of the Great Lakes presentation regarding their programs;
- Status on the development of a water trails division and funding stream (Sharon will check with Marc Miller, the agency lead); and
- Department Design Standards for council review (based on earlier discussions).

ADJOURN

Vice-Chair Jones commented that despite a full agenda we completed the meeting early. However, this extra time is the perfect opportunity to tour the museum. The museum director has offered all council members and department staff the opportunity to tour the museum and all of the exhibits free of charge.

Diana Engle gave the members an overview of the building's layout and encouraged them to provide comments to her regarding their observations, the exhibits and accessibility.

Tom then requested a motion to adjourn.

Cindy Burkhour motioned for adjournment; Kim Woolridge seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.